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NOTES ON THE IPS CONFERENCE HELD AT PORTLAND, OREGON
ON APRIL 19, 1962

The Ips Meeting was opened by Benton Howard. He expressed several thought-provoking questions, such as:

1. Do we have an ips problem now? Did we have one in the past? Will we have one in the future?

2. If we have an ips problem, what is its scope?

3. What can we do about the problem?

4. Who should do it?

5. Do we have a thinning problem or a "people" problem in relation to ips?

Wendell Harmon reviewed regional thinning policies, practices, and problems--past, present, and future in Region 6.

1. Region 6 policy is to accelerate growth of young stands by thinning.

2. Pre-commercial thinning priorities are, (a) sapling stands with d.b.h. between 1" and 3"; (b) small pole stands with an average d.b.h. between 3" and 5"; (c) stands over 5" d.b.h., planned for commercial thinning.

3. The history of thinning in Region 6 is of recent origin. Early thinnings in the 1940's were in ponderosa pine. Even today the bulk of the thinning is still in ponderosa pine. The early thinnings were done on a narrow spacing, less than 8' x 8'. The current spacing guides in Region 6 are designed for a particular product, with a minimum pre-commercial spacing of 10' x 10'.

   Most National Forest thinning is done by force account although contract thinning is on the increase in many forests. During fiscal year 1960, 13,000 acres were thinned in Region 6; in fiscal year 1961, 21,700 acres.

4. Thinning problems. Foremost is the high cost of pre-commercial thinning by force account crews. The remedy appears to be more contract thinning.

Another thinning problem is the slash created. The cost of disposing of thinning slash is often exorbitant. Can we live with thinning slash?

5. Reasons for the rapid expansion of thinning:

    a. Has been given high priority.

    b. Costs have been reduced through contracting.

    c. Better programming and use of equipment.

    d. An increase in P&M funds for TSI work.

Harmon believes thinnings in ponderosa pine will increase to 30,000 acres within a few years. He stressed the need to set thinning goals in order to meet management plans.

6. What is the future of thinning?

    a. Will be doing commercial thinning in pole stands.

        (1) Can this be done between February and July? We need to know more about Ips losses.

    b. Harmon believes the expanded scope of thinning will necessitate thinning over a longer season and particularly during spring months.

In summary, Harmon stated:

1. Pre-commercial thinning acreage on the National Forests is increasing rapidly.

2. Commercial pole thinning is in sight.

3. There is a need to operate thinning shows the year around.

4. We need to evaluate the risks of year-round thinning.

What do we know about ips habits and damage? (Peter W. Orr)

1. There is an overlap of generations (2 to 5 per year).

2. A productive insect (has rapid population build-ups in a season).

3. Its favorite food is found in slash.

4. Major adult flights occur from April until fall.

5. Attacks on green stands occur between June to September.

6. The insect is attracted by odor.

7. There appears to be a relationship of soil moisture, precipitation, and temperature to ips build-ups.

8. Ninety-five percent of ips infestation occurs between February and July, 5 percent between August and February.

Predictions of ips years. (Kenneth H. Wright)

1. Can ips years be predicted? No. Climatic factors are largely responsible.

    a. Low winter temperatures together with the location of the beetles (in duff or logs).

    b. Nature of spring weather (are the beetles attacking green trees before dormancy is over?).

    c. Natural enemies--parasites, predators.

    Only generalized predictions can be made now.

2. Can ips damage be predicted? The potential for damage is usually high under the following conditions:

    a. Pine thickets adjacent to logging that has stopped after several year's operation.

    b. Wherever the tops of felled trees are in green trees. (Branches should be lopped from tops of felled trees so they dry out faster.)

    c. Along road rights-of-way through thickets.

    d. Adjacent to burns where small trees have been scorched.

    e. The size and frequency of thinning areas may also be a factor.

Observations by Mr. Wright on ips damage in thinning areas:

Bowers Creek - Fremont, elevation 4,000-5,000 feet: Thinnings done in August and September showed no build-up of ips. Thinnings in December showed a large build-up.

Pole Butte - Fremont, northwest of Paisley: Six hundred acres thinned in late July and August 1960 showed very little attack in felled trees and then only in the larger trees.

Dooley Mountain - Wallowa-Whitman: Area thinned in December 1960; heavy logging in general area; by fall 1961 there was extremely heavy kill in the surrounding logged area and in the thinning.

Wright feels that the logging triggered the ips build-up. Mr. Howard stated that some logging clean-up had been done in the logging area during the spring of 1961.

Conclusions by Kenneth H. Wright:

1. Thinning slash laid down in December is not always considered safe.

2. The best thinning time is from July to October.

3. Where possible, it is safest to do thinning away from logging activities and not in the same areas in consecutive years.

What measures are available to minimize losses? (Benton Howard)

1. Would guidelines be helpful to forests?

2. Suggest questionnaire to be attached to project proposals for thinning to aid planner and reviewer.

3. Good programming will help minimize the effects of working on thinning projects outside the so-called safe period from July to February.

4. Handling slash--how? When?

    a. Use of continuous slash in logging and thinning.

    b. Treating slash with lindane where necessary.

5. The use of contract clauses to limit logging period.

What research is needed on ips and how much? (Robert L. Furniss)

1. Can we zone the Region to indicate ips hazard?

2. Economic evaluation of the losses from ips.

3. A way to appraise the ips hazard on local areas by the man-on-the-ground. (Score card approach.)

4. A study of ips populations in slash.

5. A study of certain direct control methods on Ips oregoni.

Are there other insect problems involved in cutting and thinning in lodgepole or ponderosa pine?

1. Stand competition triggers outbreaks of mountain pine beetle.

2. Mountain pine beetle does not build up in small diameter thinnings.

3. Will thinning pole size ponderosa, to increase stand vigor, pose a mountain pine beetle hazard where thinned trees are not marketable?

Personnel attending the Ips Conference:

Owen L. Aydelott - Wallowa-Whitman N. F.

Edward W. Anderson - Malheur N. F.

Bernard G. Duberow - Deschutes N. F.

Paul E. Buffam - Regional Office

Kenneth W. Drahos - Fremont N. F.

Robert L. Furniss - PNW Experiment Station

Clifford R. Fink - Regional Office

Benton Howard - Regional Office

Wendell H. Harmon - Regional Office

Peter W. Orr - Regional Office

Kenneth H. Wright - PNW Experiment Station